

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMCONSUL KADUNA

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3303

AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KADUNA 0239

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CPRS, NI

SUBJECT: PASSPORTS OF ABU LECTURERS PICKED UP BY POLICE

REF: KADUNA 191, KADUNA 198

1. LATE LAST WEEK PASSPORTS OF AMCITS WHO WERE INTERROGATED BY POLICE ON FEBRUARY 19 AS WELL AS THOSE OF MR. JAMES H. POLHEMUS (ALSO AMCIT) AND CANADIAN CITIZEN JACOB STERKEN (PPT NO. EC515972) WERE REQUESTED BY ABU ADMINISTRATION FOR TURNOVER TO POLICE AT LATTER ORGANIZATION'S REQUEST. STERKEN STALLED, CLAIMING HIS PASSPORT IN LAGOS AT CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION. OTHERS COMPLIED WITH REQUEST. POLHEMUS AND STERKEN ARE MEMBERS OF DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT AT AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY AS ARE PERSONS INTERROGATED ON FEBRUARY 19.

2. MR. & MRS. POLHEMUS CAME TO CONSULATE THIS MORNING TO DISCUSS SITUATION. PO ADVISED THEM TO REMAIN CALM AND SEEK RETURN OF PASSPORTS OR EXPLANATION FOR POLICE RETENTION QUIETLY THROUGH UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION DURING COURSE THIS WEEK. IF PASSPORTS NOT RETURNED BY END OF WEEK OR INDICATION RECEIVED THAT RETURN IS IMMINENT, CONSULATE WOULD INTERVENE WITH POLICE ON MATTER.

3. LATER MRS. STEEEN VISITED CONSULATE AND REQUESTED PO TRANSMIT HER HUSBAND'S PASSPORT TO CANADIAN HICOM LAGOS
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OR RETAIN IT HERE. PO DECLINED TO DO EITHER ON GROUND THAT

NON-COOPERATION IN THIS MATTER SEEMED POOR COURSE OF ACTION. HE INDICATED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED MATTER WITH AMERICANS INVOLVED AND COUNSELED COOPERATION. PO SAID HE WOULD REPORT HER VISIT TO EMBASSY WITH REQUEST THAT CANADIAN HICOM BE NOTIFIED AND ASKED PROVIDE ANY GUIDANCE FOR STERKEN WHICH IT DEEMED APPROPRIATE MRS. STERKEN SEEMED SATISFIED WITH THAT OFFER.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT EMBASSY DISCUSS SUBSTANCE THIS MESSAGE PERTAINING TO STERKEN WITH CANADIAN HICOM AND PROVIDE ANY GUIDANCE WHICH HICOM WISHES PASSED TO STERKEN.

5. COMMENT: ALL ABU LECTURERS ON WHOM POLICE FOCUSING THUS FAR WERE RECRUITED DURING TENURE OF JAMES O'CONNELL EX-CHAIRMAN ABU DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT WHO WAS EXPELLED LAST YEAR, APPARENTLY FOR OUTSPOKENNESS ON NIGERIAN POLITICAL SITUATION. AMERICANS AND MRS. STERKEN ALL CLAIM THAT UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION BEING MOST UNHELPFUL AND IRRESPONSIBLE IN REFUSING TO DEFEND FACULTY MEMBERS TO POLICE OR UNIVERSITY AT LARGE. THEY CLAIM THAT VICE-CHANCELLOR HAS ANTI-EXPATRIATE BIAS AND WAS ENEMY OF O'CONNELL. ALL SEE STRONG POSSIBILITY THEIR DEPARTURE AT END THIS SCHOOL YEAR IF NOT BEFORE EITHER THROUGH TERMINATION/NON-RENEWAL OF THEIR CONTRACTS, EXPULSION BY FMG OR VOLUNTARY DECISION TO DEPART DUE TO DETERIORATION THEIR SITUATION AT ABU. LECTURERS WHO WERE DETAINED ON FEB. 19 HAVE NOT HELD CALSSES SINCE, APPARENTLY FEARING POSSIBLE STUDENT UNPLEASANTNESS. ACCORDING TO POLHEMUS, FACULTY SENATE SESSION LAST WEEK ENDORSED THEIR DECISION NOT TO TEACH IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.

6. AM PLANNING TO SEE POLICE COMMISSIONER OR DEPUTY IN NEXT DAY OR SO AND WILL ATTEMPT LEARN STATUS OF EVALUATION OF REPORTS RESULTING FROM FEBRUARY 19 INTERROGATIONS. WILL ALSO MENTION PASSPORT PICKUP AS SOMETHING WHICH WORRYING PERSONS INVOLVED.
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